3/16- 8:45 a.m. There are way in which the Featherstone bombing could have been used as a cover for the murder of Rap Brown, as claimed by some blacks. However, I think it unlikely this includes with him as a passenger in the car. It is not as unlikely as his having been taken captive and/or murdered and removed from his quarters, if he was anywhere in the neighborhood. But this would visualize a rather large and sophisticated - and very well informed - conspiracy. Among the factors tending to credit such a possibility is the official leaking of what Brown's associates say is false information, that he was in Bel Air the day before the bombing and was known to have been seen the next day. Those quoted as having been where they could & would have seen him the next day deny it. This immediately raises questions about the leak and its motive. However, the story has achieved acceptability. WTOP news has just repeated that he was seen the day after the bombing. The trial is due to resume today. Brown presence may not be required for several days, depending upon the time required for motions and other matters.

There is a remarkable unity in the black community on this subject, as reflected in a WMAL-TV panel show yesterday afternoon, with such moderates as Fauntroy and Tucker in accord with Hobson and Md. State legislator Clarence Mitchell, appearing with the governor, openly expressing doubts about the official accounts. Mitchell at this time said he had known Featherstone for a number of years and considered it impossible he would have been transporting a bomb to use it.

Last authenticated sighting of Brown day before trial, or 3/8/70

The least likely think any friend of Rap Brown's would have done, of course, would have been to pull any kind of caper that would play into the hands of the prosecution, as any bombing would have done, or even getting caught with explosives in the city where the trial for inciting to such violence was to have been held.

3/19/70 Last night's TV new said Hoover had given Mandel a reportsaying the Cambridge explosion was caused by a time bomb and that the clock found had been similar to the one found at Bel Air. Earlier, as soon as I heard that there was a Cambridge report, but without details, I'd phoned Paul Valentine, asking him to try and get copies of both (plus the exact texts of the telegrams), telling him I expected to find something linking both. The clock accomplishes that. But there is this major difference: In the Bel Air case Hoover said he could not be certain what caused that bomb to go off. This is the same as saying the clock didn't. This very strongly suggests it was planted, to give just the impression so widely disseminated by the Hoover report. And thus it is made to seem that both bombs were the work of the same people. Now with the victims of the Bel Air bombing dead, they could not have planted the Cambridge bomb the next day. With nobody, most of all not Hoover, about the say the right did the jobs, the alternative is that the left or the black militants did it or, a militant conspiracy. One cannot believe both stories as officially presented without believing there was such a conspiracy. Perhaps examination of the text will change this opinion.

This presumption is amply supported by the available press treatment, including AP "B"wire, Wash Post, Balt a.m. Sun. NYTimes not available. The smaller Post treatment is subheaded "Bombings' Similarity", emphasises both clock and dynamite (conspicuously, no ref to any FBI statement on spectrographic analysis). The Sun has a separate story of more than a half column, "FBI Notes Similarities in Bombings". Lead: "The trigger mechanisms..were apparently of the same type." Plus,"...the FBI laboratory report that linked the two bombings". Note that Post has separate story on disqualified Judge Dwyer indicating he would have been scrupulously fair to Brown, as his statement had indicated, which suggests one reason for prosecution objection to a really non-objectionable statement.